

September 10, 2014

Co-op Communicator

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Upcoming events

September 15: Leadership Team, 2:00-3:00 p.m., White River Junction Meeting Room

September 15-16:
5% Member Discount Days

September 17: NH Businesses for Social Responsibility hosted by the Co-op

September 18: Safety Committee, 1:00-2:00 p.m., Hanover Board Room

September 19: Communication Team, 10:00-11:00 a.m., Hanover Meeting Room

Caslot sale: Oct. 9, 10, 11

From Terry Appleby

Last year I presented the Co-op's Board of Directors with a business plan that anticipated work in an area I called "culture change." The thought occurred to me that our business success was really based on the ability to grow the Co-op by being a good place to work and that satisfied the needs of our members and community. In short, we wanted more happy customers, more happy staff, and a growing, sustainable co-op. To get to those goals, we were going to need to develop more effective operations using our open book management model. And to do that, we needed to improve the culture of the Co-op in some key areas.

The business plan called for work in the areas of service, leadership, communication, appreciation, and learning. To do this, the Management Team broke up into five groups to work on those five areas. Each of the groups recruited members from throughout the organization. (The chart on the next page shows the composition of the groups.) The groups wrote charters and developed plans of action and have been chipping away at the work throughout the year.

Elements of the work have been showing up in operations. One example is in recruitment and hiring, where we have developed new standards for processing applications and written new interview questions (and actually used the processes to make new hires). Soon we will be forming and training teams of staff people to be involved in the interviewing process.

So, while there are already many people working in areas of change, there will be opportunities for even more involvement. Each culture change group is working on areas to improve processes at the Co-op, and each will mean more opportunity for you to become involved. As projects are finished, groups will re-form around new projects, and I hope you'll consider joining in!

From the Board President: Is Board Work in Your Future?

Even though Board of Directors elections aren't until next April, it's already time for the Nominating Committee to start looking for qualified candidates. Our bylaws allow up to two board positions to be filled by members who are also employees, as long as the employees don't report directly to the Board or the General Manager. It's important to note that board members who are employees don't represent the employees; they are board members who happen to be employees. Employee Directors can't serve as officers of the board, can't participate in the evaluation of the General Manager or the setting of the GM's compensation, and can only participate in executive sessions at the discretion of a majority of the non-employee members present. Otherwise, they have all the rights and responsibilities of other board members. There have been one or two employee directors on the board for most of my tenure, and they bring a unique and valuable perspective to board work.

(Next week: What's involved in being on the board?)

Hanover Renovation

With a little luck we're just a few weeks away from breaking ground on the remodel project. We are constantly addressing obstacles as they arise and working hard to keep the cost in line. Everything costs more in an old store reconstruction project, but we'll stay within budget and are excited to begin. In a couple of weeks many of you will meet George Holcomb, the project Superintendent. George is known to many at the Lebanon store from his work on the Culinary Learning Center where he was liked by all. I'm confident you will all appreciate George very much.

Vermont Mac & Cheese Challenge

if you're bored this Sunday and aren't interested in watching the Patriots lose another game, join the fun at Harpoon Brewery in Windsor, VT, from 11-3. The Co-op Commissary has entered the competition this year for the best mac & cheese. They'll be up against 30 other restaurants. Not to mention that Harpoon Draft Beer will be served as well!

—Tony White

Fun With Food



Here's one for the COS.

Answer next week!

Answer to last week's Fun with Food photo:
Cupcakes

Culture Change at the Co-op

Five teams of Co-op employees from across the organization meet on a regular basis to work on the five "pillars" that support effective operations and open book management. Together, they're striving to improve how we hire and orient new employees, how we share information internally, how we support our current and future leaders with effective training opportunities, and how well we express our appreciation to fellow employees for a job well-done.

Appreciation

Jason Dacier
Bruce Follett
Tammy Henderson
Jesse Johnson
Jimmy Kidder
Allan Reetz
Jeff Withington

Service

Terry Appleby
Dot Benham
Genie Braasch
Ray Mitchell
Brian Rossi
Deanna Vaillancourt
Tony White

Communication

Sheila Clark
Caroline Collison
Peter Florucci
Sue Jacobs
Loretta Land
Cathy Moloney
Lucas Moyer
Katrina Peront
Earl Varney

Leadership

Rick Argent
Audra Bonds
Kristen Curley
Rosemary Fifield
Koni Fletcher
John Holmes
Matt Mazur
Steve Miller
Leon Valia

Training

Penny L. Ashley
Jen Dunn
Bob Kazakiewicz
Tanya Kovach
Raylene Lamadeleine
Paul Lambe
Mischa Spittle

By the Numbers: Shoppers

Monday through Friday, an average of 5,400 shoppers visit our four stores each day. On Sundays we see roughly 3,850 and on Saturdays close to 4,500.

Our highest shopper count to date this year was on July 3rd with 7,001 shoppers! That exceeded last year's July 3rd by over 300.

By the Numbers Quiz

What single day last year saw the most shoppers in our stores?

- a) Tuesday, November 25
- b) Monday, December 23
- c) Tuesday, December 31

Moving Up!

Former Lebanon Front End Supervisor Jenn Dunn was promoted to Assistant Front End Manager last week.

Congratulations, Jenn!

Answer to last week's By the Numbers quiz: How many 5-lb. totes of apples did the Co-op sell last fall? 17,327!